

Message Text

SECRET

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH

S E C R E T SECTO 4118

NODIS
CHEROKEE

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE ACTING SECRETARY ONLY FROM
THE SECRETARY

PLEASE PASS WHITE HOUSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)
SUBJECT: MAY 19 EARLY EVENING WITH GROMYKO

1. I MET WITH GROMYKO FOR TWO HOURS THIS EVENING ON
THE MIDDLE EAST. HE WAS UNUSUALLY NON-POLEMICAL, SAYING
THERE WAS NO NEED FOR EITHER OF US TO REPEAT OUR WELL-
KNOWN POSITIONS TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT. HE PROPOSED THAT
WE ISSUE A STATEMENT ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF RECONVENING
THE GENEVA CONFERENCE AND INDICATING A SPECIFIC MONTH
WHEN IT SHOULD RECONVENE. I BELIEVE THAT SOME STATEMENT
REAFFIRMING OUR DESIRE TO GET THE PEACE PROCESS MOVING
WOULD BE PSYCHOLOGICALLY USEFUL IN THE AREA IN THE WAKE
OF THE PESSIMISTIC REACTIONS TO THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS,
AND WOULD ALSO BE CONSISTENT WITH OUR STRATEGY OF GIVING
THE SOVIETS AN APPEARANCE OF HAVING A ROLE TO PLAY.
I THEREFORE AGREED THAT WE WOULD WORK WITH THE SOVIETS
ON A BRIEF, NON-SUBSTANTIVE STATEMENT ABOUT THE
IMPORTANCE OF RECONVENING GENEVA BUT TOLD GROMYKO I
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THOUGH WE SHOULD SIMPLY SEPAK OF SEEKING TO MEET THIS
FALL RATHER THAN PINNING OURSELVES DOWN TO A MORE
SPECIFIC TIMEFRAME. WE WILL BE DRAFTING APPROPRIATE
LANGUAGE FOR ISSUANCE AT THE END OF OUR TALKS. I ALSO
SUGGESTED, AND GROMYKO WELCOMED THE SUGGESTION, THAT WE
AGREE TO HAVE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS AT AMBASSADORIAL
LEVEL TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON THE MIDDLE EAST. WE WILL

INCLUDE LANGUAGE TO THIS EFFECT IN OUR JOINT STATEMENT.

2. BEYOND THE FOREGOING, GROMYKO AND I COMPARED NOTES ON THE STATUS OF OUR RESPECTIVE CONTACTS WITH THE PARTIES. GROMYKO SAID IT WAS THEIR DEFINITE IMPRESSION THAT THE PLO IS PREPARED TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST IF ISRAEL WILL RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTININAS TO AN INDEPENDENT STATE. IN RESPONSE TO MY EMPHASIS ON THE POINT THAT PEACE MUST BE MORE THAN SIMPLY AN END TO THE STATE OF WAR, GROMYKO SAID THAT HE FULLY AGREED AND AT ONE POINT SAID SPECIFICALLY THAT THE SOVIET OBJECTIVE WAS A FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT AND NORMAL RELATIONS IN THE AREA. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT THE QUESTION OF HOW THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD BE REPRESENTED AT GENEVA SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO RISK A RENEWED OUTBREAK OF WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST. IN REVIEWING THE CORE ISSUES OF A SETTLEMENT, HE PROBED PARTICULARLY ON THE TERRITORIAL QUESTION, REFLECTING CONSIDERABLE SUSPICION THAT THE PHRASE "MINOR RECTIFICATIONS" IN THE 1967 BORDERS COULD IN PRACTICE MEAN TERRITORIAL CHANGES THAT WOULD SEEM SUBSTANTIAL TO THE ARABS. I SIMPLY TOLD HIM THAT OUR POSITION ON THIS POINT CONTINUED TO BE BASED ON SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242.

3. FINALLY, I PRESSED GROMYKO ON THE POINT THAT THE ARABS NEEDED TO COME TO SOME REASONABLE POSITION AMONG THEMSELVES ON A SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINIAN HOMELAND AND REPRESENTATION ISSUES, AND ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIETS

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THOUGHT THE IRAQIS AND LIBYANS COULD BE PERUADED TO ADOPT A LESS OBSTRUCTIONIST POSITION. HE COUNTERED THIS BY SAYING THAT WE COULD NOT EXPECT THE ARABS TO COME TO FULL AGREEMENT ON ANYTHING AMONG THEMSELVES AND THAT IT WAS UP TO THE U.S. AND USSR, AS CO-CHAIRMEN, TO BE MORE VIGOROUS AND TAKE MORE INITIATIVES TO MOVE THE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD. I SAID WE FIRST BOTH NEEDED TO CINTINUE OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES INCLUDING, IN PARTICULAR, OUR CONTACTS WITH THE NEW ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WHEN ONE IS FORMED. IN THIS RESPECT, I TRIED TO GET ACROSS TO HIM SOME OF THE REALTITIES OF THE ISRAELI POLITICAL PROCESS, STRESSING THAT IT WILL TAKE A MONTH OR TWO BEFORE THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN ISRAEL CALRIFIEES.VANCE

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